New York Tribune

First to Last—the Truth: News—Editorials—Advertisements.

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A Way to End Pork Hunting.

Getting a $42,000,000 River and Harbor act through Congress has elated and invigorated the pork hunters. If the President approves this vicious legislative hand-out, the signal will at once be given for another raid on the Treasury in the shape of a Public Buildings Appropriation bill. The pork hunters are in a majority in each branch of Congress. If the President is afraid to defy them, no limit can be put on their rapacity—except the limit of temporarily satisfied appetite.

Patriotic members of Congress, who put the interest of the country as a whole before the interest of their states and districts, are beginning to despair of shaking off the I-tickle-you-and-you-tickle-me system of spending the public's money. Few Presidents can be expected to have the moral courage to veto pork measures. There are always a few justifiable appropriations mixed in with the unjustifiable ones. It is easy for a President to salve his conscience by arguing that he has no power to distinguish between the good projects and the bad ones. He hesitates to sacrifice the former in order to defeat the latter.

In order to meet this difficulty Representative James, of Michigan, has introduced an amendment to the Constitution giving the President the right to veto separate items in appropriation bills. This is a power which many of the states have vested their Governors—with excellent results. An Executive, representing the country in its entirety, would thus have a complete check on legislators, ignoring the interests of the whole for the benefit of favored parts.

We can see no reason why the veto power of the President should not be thus broadened and reinforced. He represents at Washington the principle of nationalism, while Congress represents, in the main, the principles of sectionalism and particularism. Anything that strengthens the nationalistic influence in our scheme of government cannot but be helpful, for our greatest problem to-day is to nationalize the country politically, economically and spiritually. We cannot create a real Americanism until we stamp out sectionalism, particularism and hyphenism.

We should all serve the nation first, and our states and local interests second. But that lesson is still the hardest of all for Americans to learn, with their history intertwined for two hundred years with the traditions of colonialism, of state sovereignty, of sectional prejudice and of localism in ambition and outlook.

If Congress cannot nationalize itself, it would be wise to strip away from it the license which it now enjoys to parochialize expenditure. Federal appropriations should have an absolutely Federal purpose. If Congress cannot rise to a true application of that theory, then the country must look to the President to apply and vindicate it. Let us put all the pork into one big barrel, in the President's custody, instead of wastefully parcelling it out into as many little barrels as there are Senators and Representatives.

Trade Unionism in Literature.

The discussion aroused by the proposed union of the Authors' League with the American Federation of Labor tends to exaggerate both the advantages and the disadvantages of the project. So far as the public is concerned the practical results of such an affiliation will make little difference. It is difficult to see how literature would in any way be affected.

As to the possibility of American authors going on a strike, there is little fear or hope of it. As to the danger that literature may become the mere apologist of the cause of labor, there is little to fear. Authors are of two kinds, those who have something of their own to say and those who simply cater to the popular tastes of the moment. The former, who alone are artists, and whose literary product alone is worth reading, will have their say just the same, and they will continue to speak as individuals no matter to what organization they may happen to belong. The latter, whether they make it their business to flatter labor or capital, will be rated at their true worth by all discriminating readers. And for those who do not discriminate it may even be an advantage to have certain literary hucksters labelled.

It is no secret that many sincere literary artists, sharing the social spirit of these times, are in sympathy with labor in its present struggle against capital. If such writers prefer to line up more definitely on the side of labor, for the sake of the moral support they may be able to give that movement, it is clearly within their right to do so. Possibly in this way they may help overcome the silly prejudice of a large section of the American public against "intellectuals."

For the greater part, the objection to trade unionism in literature, on the ground that art is too individual a matter to be unionized, is beside the point. If this were an age of Goethes and Samuel Johnsons, such an objection might hold, but then it would hardly be necessary. But this is a mechanical age. It is not the age of the artist, but of the artisan and the engineer. Few people will deny to-day that it is to the advantage of the average mechanic to belong to a trade union. When literature is a "trade" the logical thing to do is to join the union. The only wonder is that those writers who manufacture fiction and drama with hammer and saw, who turn out their annual product of ready made ideas constructed according to prevailing patterns, have not long since discovered their true calling and allied themselves with the building trades.

Our Hopeless Manners.

When all else fails our magazine authors sit down and dictate an essay upon American manners, in serene confidence that another kick at this battered victim of a million cutting critics will please everybody. Naturally there is nothing very startling in the latest of these assaults in the current "Harper's." Yet in midsummer, when our own manners are at their lowest ebb, it strikes us as distinctly too much.

Aside from quoting the staple views upon manners by Emerson, de Tocqueville and Charles Lamb and running in a Chesterfield anecdote, this greatly depressed critic finds most fault with our national lack of distinction and grace. We are "no longer debonair." In the years to come he descries "few traditions of courtliness, scant reminders that *noblesse oblige* and but scattered memories of inherited responsibilities." He rolls up his eyes at our "petted, cajoled, pampered, overdressed and underdisciplined" children, and sees hope only in a social and economic revolution which shall by some unexplained magic flower into "a republic of chivalry."

There cannot be any especial harm in such an effort to tie a time-worn tin can to the tail of democracy. But at the risk of asking too much from brains on their summer loaf we suggest that instead of judging American manners by the standards of courts and nobility these critics test them by their fitness for present day life. What is the sense of lamenting courtliness when courts are vanished? Why prate of *noblesse oblige* when the whole inspiration for the phrase is as dead as Queen Anne? To hold up such meaningless ideals is to show an utter blindness to the whole reason and use of manners. To cultivate such ideals successfully would be to produce a system as utterly false and self-conscious and vulgar as manners could well be.

The glory of American manners as we see them is that they are not—with a few ridiculous exceptions that count for nothing—artificially imposed from another age or another country, but are the gradual, developing, imperfect expression of a new democracy finding itself. A nation in a hurry, yes. A nation in a state of social flux, yes, and thank our stars therefor! But the essential of good manners is neither slow elegance nor class demarcations. It is courtesy and kindliness. If these are present you have the supreme use of manners, to make human relations comfortable and pleasant, and you have as well beauty. And in essential courtesy and kindliness we think Americans stand well up on the list.

At any rate, that is the real question at issue, rather than some bygone standards of not-speaking-until-they-are-spoken-to children or drawing room ritual that coexists with a brutality toward inferiors unsurpassed by savage tribes.

The Telephone Hater.

Everybody knows the telephone hater. If the subject of telephones is started in any ordinary group of humans, his or her voice is certain to be heard. "I simply can't talk on the telephone—I can't understand a word they say," is the usual declaration. A plaintive note is in the voice, yet the general attitude is full of pride, as who should say: "You folk can use this modern nuisance if you want to; but I, I like the good old methods best."

If such a telephone hater rounds out his career by writing with a quill pen, using sealing wax and taking snuff, he has our sympathy and admiration. There stands a courageous and consistent anachronism. But he, or especially she, too often balks at any such wholesale rejection of modern comforts. We have known telephone haters who made you give the message to the maid while they themselves whizzed off in an electrically lighted limousine to the Russian ballet. A shade of toploftiness is to be detected here. The telephone is essentially a democratic instrument, levelling all ranks. It is distinctly irritating to the super-refined to reflect that any American with a nickel can send his voice right into the noblest home or office in the land—assuming, of course, that Central is in an accurate mood. But even in this latter respect democracy rules, for a wrong number is just as likely to obstruct the President of the United States as the humblest voter.

The benefit of the doubt may be given to a few anti-telephonists who are sincerely unable to talk with an invisible conversationalist. Some rather subtle psychology is involved here. Most of us have improved wonderfully in our telephone chattering with the experience of years. Good telephone talk is distinctly an art to be perfected. The Frenchman who gesticulates at the telephone is probably nearer right than the jests at his expense would indicate. Certainly, the only way to talk effectively is to smile cheerfully and frown angrily as the occasion demands, and in general persuade as much personality into your voice as possible. It is a remnant of cold unimaginatives who miss all fun and force, and who still find themselves after years of trying at a real disadvantage when not face to face with a talker.

Thus the haters dwindle and the adepts increase as the years go by. Every time that a thunderstorm puts telephones out of commission in the suburbs, some realization of what the telephone has come to mean hits a community. We eat by it, we invite by it, we bluff by it and make love by it. To the true expert, who feels as much at home with a receiver nestling against an ear and his lips pursing sweetly into a transmitter as if he were seated on the same front porch in the same moonlight, all things are possible. The ardent telephone lover is far more typical of the day and generation than any occasional hater.

Cocaine in War Time.

If cocaine is really so popular in the British army as a recent dispatch from London suggests, it is probably because of the lack of reasonable restrictions on the trade in habit-forming drugs. Hitherto the use of cocaine has not been widespread in England, or at least its perils have not been so generally recognized as they are here. It is said to have been introduced to the troops in the form of snuff by members of the Canadian contingent, and now, according to one London journal, the traffic has "reached the dimensions of a big scandal."

Possibly the extent of the evil is exaggerated. It may be recalled that more than a year ago there was a great deal of irresponsible talk about the abuse of cocaine in France, especially among civilians, and at the time it was shrewdly intimated that German agents were at work, secretly endeavoring by means of this subtle and dangerous drug to undermine the health and resistance of the nation. It is certain, however, that cocaine is used more extensively in England than heretofore, and the very fact that the Army Council was obliged quite recently to issue an order dealing with the traffic among soldiers shows how very inadequate the ordinary law is.

Cocaine is listed in the Poisons Schedule under the British Pharmacy Act, but in comparison with the restrictions we are accustomed to the law in England is wonderfully mild. A druggist may sell cocaine to any customer who is personally known to him, provided he complies with the statutory requirements as to labelling and registration of sale. Moreover, whether he knows his customer or not he is at liberty to fill a prescription for cocaine, and no evidence is required to show that the prescription was made out by a medical practitioner.

The new order of the Army Council very properly provides that cocaine, as well as several other habit-forming drugs, shall not be supplied to any member of the forces "unless ordered for him by a registered medical practitioner on a written prescription, dated and signed by the practitioner with his full name and qualifications, and marked with the words 'not to be repeated,' and unless the person so selling or supplying shall mark the prescription with his name and address and the date on which it is dispensed."

It will be seen, then, that even this "war emergency" measure, applying only to the army, is less drastic than the ordinary law in this country. In fact, a soldier in England has fewer difficulties put in his way than a physician has here.

Toeing-Out.

(From The Providence Journal.)

Are United States foot soldiers still instructed to "toe out"? It has been said that toeing-out, at an angle of about thirty degrees, was an invention of military men, to show that they know more than the Lord.

Very likely it has passed out of fashion, with many another favored practice of the parade ground. A writer in the Journal of the American Medical Association declares that for soldiers, as other men, the toeing-out position is anatomically and physiologically wrong and indefensible. Walking or marching, it makes for weakness and hastens fatigue.

All tramps know that, of course, if their style of walking is evidence. And most of us are familiar with the characteristic toeing-in, or straight foot, of the American Indian, child of nature. He looks awkward by contrast to the striding soldier, but he shuffles over the ground rapidly and tirelessly.

Parents are largely responsible for perpetuating the fiction that toeing-out is "correct." Was there ever a child that stood, or walked, that way, naturally? The child that finds it difficult to avoid thoughtless toeing-in is apt to be subjected to reprimand, or ridicule, at home and at school.

So the artificial toeing-out is cultivated until it becomes a fixed habit. But, as this medical authority analyzes it, the feet must undergo a process of reshaping, in order to sustain the body on the unnatural toeing-out foundation. The effect on the physical organization, as a whole, can hardly be favorable, and may prove positively harmful.

Would Mexico Sell Her Territory?

(From The Washington Post.)

If Mexico were the home of real statesmanship there might be some hope of success in the proposed negotiations for the purchase by the United States of Lower California and certain northern states of Mexico.

Mexico would be wise in selling Lower California, the five northern states and Yucatan. Possibly the United States would not purchase them or any of them. But if a bargain could be arranged it would be a benefit to both nations. The territories now unproductive would be cultivated and developed, and Mexico would profit by this growth as well as by the purchase money, which would enable her to put her people to work for real money. Yucatan produces the raw material which furnishes binder twine to American farmers, and if war should interrupt sisal imports the farmers of this country would be compelled, for a time at least, to curtail their wheat acreage. Chihuahua, Coahuila and Nuevo Leon are good cotton states. Tamaulipas is a rich oil state, and Sonora yields copper and gold. Both Sonora and Lower California possess profitable fisheries and fine harbors. Magdalena Bay alone would justify the purchase of Lower California by the United States.

These resources are practically neglected by Mexico. That nation cannot develop them while its people are starving. By selling a portion of its immense superfluous territory Mexico would be able to develop the remainder and enter upon an era of unprecedented prosperity.

But the plan is nothing but a dream.

RACES OF GREAT BRITAIN

Scots and Cymry Not To Be Confounded with the Blue-Dyed Picts.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I have read the letter published in to-day's Tribune under the caption "England vs. Britain." Your correspondent, who signs himself "Englishman," includes the Welsh among the Gaelic races. But the Welsh or Cymry and Gaels, both Scotch and Irish, are brother nations and constitute the Celtic race. The identification of Celtic and Gaelic is as erroneous and misleading as that of German and Prussian.

According to "Englishman" blue paint was the fashion in Britain at Cæsar's time. But the Celts never painted their skins blue with woad, and Britons (Britanni) were essentially Celtic in the first pre-Christian century. The tattooing custom only prevailed among the scattered Pictish tribes. As the ethnology of early Britain is a puzzle even to many Englishmen, a few remarks on the interesting topic may be apposite.

The Welsh invaders of Albion nicknamed the tattooed native "Briton," which means "painted" in the Cymric tongue. The Latin rendering is "Pict," as the pre-Celtic population of Great Britain was called since the Roman age. The Anglo-Saxon conquerors, who hail from the "wilds of Northern Germany," as your correspondent tells us, transferred the time-hallowed name "Briton" to the vanquished Celts, and ultimately took it over themselves. In pre-historic times the polyandrous Picts overran the whole of England and even infested the Isle of Wight. As the North Sea is known in England and Scotland as the "German Ocean," so the Irish Gaels named the French Channel "Ict Sea," that is, Sea of the Picts; the initial "p" being regularly dropped in Erse. The Picts would not have left their name in ancient geography unless they had been powerful and numerous.

The Germanic population of Great Britain rests on two racial substrata, the Welsh and Picts, or, more broadly speaking, on a Celtic and British subsoil. The original Britons, in blood and physique as well as speech and customs, showed strong Finnish affinities, but the Welsh and Gaels and English, the whole bunch of Britishers, belong to the Aryan or Indo-European stock.

ERNEST P. HORRWITZ.
Formerly Lecturer at Dublin University and Queen's College, London.
New York, July 20, 1916.

Insanity and Inebriety in Kansas.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: In your esteemed journal, issue of July 14, Mr. Whidden Graham more than coyly intimated that I spoke without authority in saying inebriates were committed as insane in Kansas, and said:

"It is up to Mr. Everhart to furnish proof of his assertion or admit that he deliberately sought to deceive your readers."

In an article by Mr. Harry Bowman, a member of the State Board of Control of Kansas, and given publicity in October, 1915, are these words:

"The Census Bureau incorrectly states that in 1910 the insanity of 70 patients admitted to the Kansas state hospitals was caused by alcohol and that the insanity of 20 of the patients admitted to the Nebraska State Hospital was caused by alcohol. We are at a loss to know how the government report got the figures 70. The correct figures are 24. The government also missed something very important in compiling the Nebraska figures. The Kansas figures of 24 include the inebriates who are sent to the state insane hospitals as insane, while in Nebraska inebriates are committed under a different law and are not included in the census report of the population of the Nebraska state insane hospitals. The inebriates go to the same institution as the insane and are mixed and mingle in the same wards, whether admitted as insane or inebriates. On page 115 of the biennial report of 1912 of the Lincoln, Neb., State Hospital for the Insane, the superintendent states from July 8, 1905, to November 30, 1912, 1,172 men and 52 women were committed as inebriates. This would be an average of almost 174 a year, in addition to the 20 insane with alcohol psychosis in Nebraska."

Mr. Graham has my authority, and it will take more than a letter from some Kansas legislator confessing ignorance of the above to disprove it.

Pardon a smile at Mr. Graham's solemn solicitude lest your readers be "deliberately deceived" by me! In my letter of May 18 I exhibited him as a quoter of the United States census on a subject concerning which the United States census has issued no figures. I did not suggest that he "admit he deliberately sought to mislead your readers," but if he wants to he may.

ROLLIN O. EVERHART,
Editor "The American Issue" (New York edition).
New York, July 17, 1916.

Soldiering for Boys.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: May I bear my testimony through your columns to the wonderful work being done at the schoolboys' camp at Fort Terry, Plum Island? I have just come from there. It is hard to believe that Colonel Hero has had these boys for but one week. The entire regiment of 1,200 boys is under the most perfect discipline. The tone of the camp is excellent. The boys look splendid. I met boys from all over the country and from all sorts of schools, and they were all enthusiastic and happy. The regular army officers, the West Point cadets and the Plattsburg "rookies" are all devoting themselves to the work of military instruction in a way that will leave a very distinct impression.

Those of us who are interested in national defence must do our part in finding the boys who will be most benefited by this camp experience. There is to be another camp in August, and it is possible to send boys to it at a cost of about $25 a boy. The benefits derived are far out of proportion to the cost.

Plans must be perfected for more camps next summer. I believe that there will be over ten thousand boys ready to enlist for the five weeks' training.

Meanwhile our thanks are due Colonel Hero and his assistants for proving beyond all doubt that the idea is practical.

FREDERICK H. SILL,
Headmaster of Kent School.
Kent, Conn., July 19, 1916.

Russian Losses.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: In regard to K. G. Fritsching's letter of July 18, 1916, and the "Russian Losses Severe" item, permit me to point out that this "news" was a fake, originated by the Overseas News Agency and sent broadcast by wireless. At no time have the Russian officials stated that from the beginning of the Russian offensive to July 1 the number of Russians killed reached 14,900 officers and 248,000 men. The story was invented in Berlin so that the Russian victory could be minimized.

I may point out to you that it is not in the Russian blood to cry about war losses, and we will count our loss after the war is over. And to say that that news item came from official Russian reports is on a par with the 3,000,000 Russians captured by the Overseas News Agency last year. So much for the truth—first to last.

PAUL DE KILDUCHEVSKY.
New York, July 20, 1916.

HOME TO ROOST.

IF THE GERMAN ARMY VOTED

"The Frankfurter Zeitung's" Proposal of a Truce to Permit German Soldiers to Participate in the Coming Election Is Compared with the Crisis in France in 1870-'71.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: "The Frankfurter Zeitung," whose articles on commerce and finances always attract great attention even in foreign lands, and one of the most influential newspapers in Germany, publishes a remarkable article, of which the cable brings us a brief synopsis. It is not so much for what it says, but for what an impartial observer may read between the lines, that the following excerpt deserves more than a passing notice: "It would be well," says the paper, "if a truce could be arranged in order to permit half of the German army to return home for the elections, in order that the real feeling of the nation under the changed conditions may be ascertained."

The elections refer to the Reichstag whose legal existence expires on December 31 next. There is nothing extraordinary for a German newspaper to remind the Imperial Government of an approaching election. "The Frankfurter Zeitung," however, goes much further; it speaks of a truce to permit the army to participate in the elections, not in order to favor any special political party, but to "ascertain the real feeling of the nation under the changed conditions."

What does it all mean? One will please bear in mind that the "Frankfurter Zeitung" does not belong to what is called the reptilian press, that it does not depend for its existence on the "secret funds" of Wilhelmstrasse; one cannot help but wonder at the careful wording of the above lines and draw the only conclusion that is plausible and logical, which resumes itself in a disguised confession that spells defeat.

That word defeat suggests, if not a similar situation, at least a certain analogy with the crisis in France during the last Franco-Prussian war, which crisis culminated into a demand for general elections for an "Assemblée Nationale," a House of Representatives, a Reichstag. In those dark days when France was beaten there was a party headed by the great Gambetta who wanted war to a finish "la guerre à outrance," whereas the more conservative republicans as well as reactionaries, thought that it was in the interest of France to make peace. Therefore, with the consent of the Iron Chancellor, elections were held all over France, including Alsace-Lorraine. The result was what it was expected to be; an Assemblée Nationale eager to make peace. The members for Alsace-Lorraine, among them Gambetta, the only ones who were opposed to the peace terms, resigned after having protested of their loyalty to France in a declaration solemnly read and silently listened to by the entire Assembly with heads bowed down.

The present situation in Germany, politically speaking, bears comparison with France of 1870-71. While it is true, as Von Bethmann-Hollweg occasionally remarks, that on the map Germany is victorious, it is also true that economically the Central Powers are beaten, and beaten to a frazzle, as our own Roosevelt would say.

The Kaiser may rush madly from one front to another, the Kronprinz may distribute carloads of Iron Crosses to his soldiers, who look to Verdun as the promised land, our own German-Americans here may shout themselves hoarse at the arrival of a submarine merchantman (?); yet, notwithstanding all that, the fact remains undisputed that the German commerce is gone, that the German colonies are gone, that instead of advancing the Teutonic armies are retiring on all fronts, while at home the population, who are not burdened with overloaded stomachs, commence to realize that the Entente Powers are not a myth, that they are a real live force, bent not on conquest, but on justice with a capital J.

The German people who have been fed rather lavishly on bulletins of victory instead of on meat and other necessaries of life cannot always be deceived. But there are a great many of them, not a majority, however, who do not believe that Germany is or can be beaten. Their appetite for annexation of other lands, as Belgium and Serbia, for instance, is voracious; their insistence for a huge war indemnity with which to crush France forever borders on madness, their passion to justify the slogan "Deutschland uber Alles" is running wild, and they want the war to continue to a finish, regardless of the economical conditions of their country, regardless of the millions of orphans and widows. It is to convince neutral powers and the intelligent Germans of the unpopularity of the war party to-day that the "Frankfurter Zeitung" advocates a general election "to ascertain the real feeling." It is easy to understand what the great newspaper which, as stated before, is one of the most influential and an authority on commerce and finance, has in mind when it uses the words "real feeling." The feeling evidently as experienced now in Germany does not represent a true state of affairs, a real state of affairs, according to the "Frankfurter Zeitung." A new election would prove unquestionably that what is now a strong undercurrent for peace will develop into a formidable demand for peace when the election returns are in.

Besides, the German paper suggests that half of the army be permitted to participate in the elections. Assuming this to be feasible, what is the purpose of injecting the military vote into the solution of the problem of peace or war. In order to answer that properly it is necessary to recall that hundreds of thousands of men at the various fronts are Socialists, who as long as they wear the military uniform cannot express any opinion. The iron discipline has muzzled them, but they cannot refrain from thinking of their beloved ones at home, whose situation is more than precarious. They get, by the teaspoonful, if I may so express it, information as to the occasional rioting in the large German cities, particularly among the working classes in Saxony, the great manufacturing centre of the Empire. They have not forgotten, these Socialists, what has happened to their esteemed and much respected leader Dr. Liebknecht, who is presently confined in a dark cell for having dared, on the first of May, to tell his constituents that the war had lasted long enough. Putting two and two together, then, it is logical to suppose that the Socialist soldiers, if they are permitted to vote, will as one man write the word Peace on their ballots by voting for a candidate of the Liebknecht type. Beside the Socialists, there are others in the army whom the Germans derisively call the "Deutscher Michel"—the peasant, whose patriotism officially is reflected in "hoching the Kaiser," but whose mind and heart is with his farm, with his fields and with the next crop. They constitute in themselves, those farmers, an army of peace for whom the Iron Cross has ceased to be an attraction. Their votes will swell the peace movement, and that is what prompts the "Frankfurter Zeitung," whose former bellicose attitude is strangely dampened, to suggest "a truce to permit half of the army to return home for the elections." So that on the side of peace will be found the Deutscher Michel, the Socialist, the small business man, while against them will stand, showing a united front, the Agrarians, the Prussians, the "Gott Mit Uns," "The Deutschland uber Alles," personified by the Kaiser, the Kronprinz, Von Tirpitz and Reventlow.

Of course the Kaiser may use his constitutional rights and dissolve the Reichstag if a majority of that body is against the continuance of the war. Will William II dare to do that? To which question echo answers he will dare anything to save his throne.

The situation is unprecedented. The fears of a revolution seem to haunt even the German General Staff, who in an appeal to the German people, feels compelled to declare this morning that "never has an army braved what ours has braved."

Shades of Bismarck, Moltke and von Roon, has it come to that! JONAS LIPPMANN.
(Formerly of the Journal d'Alsace.)
New York, July 21, 1916.

THE CIVIL SERVICE TABOO

How It Silences and Stultifies Its Members by Its Rules.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: What is the principle which underlies the rigid rules regarding the political activity of civil service employes? The other day a justice of the Supreme Court addressed a large body on an important race question. No strong protest has been made. But when a private citizen in search of a career has been attracted to civil service duties he finds himself confronted with exacting restraints. To commit himself openly on a public question or to publicly take a controversial part in such measures is forbidden.

A part of an appointee's papers, which I have, contains executive orders of the Federal Civil Service Commission. Among other things civil service employes are warned from "writing for publication or publishing any letter or article, signed or unsigned, in favor of or against any political party, candidate, faction or measure; activity in the campaigns concerning the regulation or suppression of the liquor traffic; distribution of campaign literature, badges, or buttons, or wearing such badges or buttons while on duty; the circulation but not the signing of political petitions (including initiative and referendum, recall and nomination petitions), activity in woman suffrage campaigns."

Is it necessary to act so contrary to democratic principles to keep the civil service free from corrupt politics? The "spoils system" is a thing of the past. Political activity isn't necessarily bad, nor is good politics in any amount unwelcome.

Inquiry at the Federal Building elicited the fact that the above restrictions are valid for Federal, state and municipal civil service. To a question about writing letters to editors on public measures the answer was that they were not permitted. The same rules apply to unclassified laborers. "A man can do those things," said the speaker, "but when some one catches up with him he will have to stop and take the responsibility."

To the writer the incident looks something like a coup. It has its psychology. In the Federal service alone there are about 400,000 employes. Even if none of them was interested in the progressive measures on which restrictions are placed—woman suffrage, initiative, referendum, recall and prohibition—to have them brought to the attention in such a way would tend in the future to chill or stifle any legitimate interest concerning them. To those in the service such progressive movements may during their time spell "taboo."

Does any one get effusive in justifying these restrictions? Does it not show distrust on the part of the authorities? Or is it simply another case of partisan or personal interests at work? What is meant by "free speech," and should it not go hand and hand with the one essential right—the right to vote?

THEODORE MICHEL.
Flatbush, July 20, 1916.

The Rush to the Border.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: "Hike Kills Soldier; Kerwan, 12th Infantry, Victim of Exhaustion," say the headlines in this morning's Tribune. We did not know Joseph B. Kerwan, but it is to be supposed that he has a mother, wife, sister or some woman or women who mourn for him. What we wish to know is whether our President and his gifted colleagues realize that these women who have had their loved ones taken by force from them will demand a reckoning for an order as autocratic as was ever known in a country governed by an absolute monarch?

Who are the superiors who send out men fresh from office and factory, unaccustomed to a life in the open in the North, to say nothing of a tropical sun? What sort of medical inspection have we? Is it to prove we can raise an army in twenty-four hours, as was asserted? Many pertinent questions can be asked. How answered? It may be said, "What can you do about it?" There are many things we may do about it. Women no longer weakly cry, no longer are helpless children, dependent on others for ideas. Women have become creature of action, as the coming election may show.

Women may become a solid phalanx clamoring at the gate for something more than a note in flowing English.

A MOTHER.
Richmond Hill, N. Y., July 18, 1916.